/138 cont./

153 /footnote 3 cont./ the Tukano language: first one would talk, then another, then two or more simultaneously, and afterwards all remained silent. We would first press this one, then that one, who seemed to understand our wishes. Only after we had opened the typed originals of the present work and the most unrestrained of them had read the excerpt that I was referring to did he add: "that is the way it is." In order to solve this simple question, 40 minutes went by!

12 Properly speaking there is no term in the Tukano idiom equivalent
[192] to the word /139/ ultimate: they would say, more concretely:
[196] the one of the end, the one of the extremity (yaxpa-ti-kãgõ masc., yaxpa-ti-kãgõ, fem., yaxpa-ti-kãra, pl., yaxpa-ti-kãse, neuter).

For this reason one must not be content, insofar as possible, to obtain the translation of a word from only one individual or on only one occasion. Many times the word is heard pronounced differently. Is it a matter of faulty pronunciation by the individual? By which one of them? By all? Or is the divergence due to regional pronunciations? And then which of them will be the best? Or, finally, is it a matter of terms corresponding to a similar Portuguese word? Which of them would be the best? Would they be perfect synonyms? We point out these difficulties in order for one to understand the efforts of anyone who decides to study directly with the Indian the language of the latter. It is ten times more difficult than to study a foreign idiom with the help of teachers, grammars, and vocabularies.

[193] The Indian is a man of reality, hence his difficulty with generalizations and abstractions. Instead of saying simply and abstractly head, he will prefer to say "my head, your head," etc. He does not say: to work, to eat (the Tukano language does not even have the infinitive form). He will say: "I work, you eat," etc.